

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission**  
**Special Meeting**  
**August 24, 2006**

Present in the Director's Office: Director Steve Huffaker; Deputy Director Terry Mansfield; Deputy Attorney General Dallas Burkhalter; Assistant to the Director Steve Barton; Jim Lau, Chief, Bureau of Administration; Gayle Valentine, Funding Coordinator; Jim Unsworth, Chief, Bureau of Wildlife; Neils Nokkentved, Desktop Publishing Specialist; Mary Boyer, Executive Assistant; and Nate Helm. Staff participating from Region 2: Jim White, Dave Cadwallader, John Nelson, Sam McNeil and Eric Barker from the *Lewiston Tribune*.

A special meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was held by telephone conference. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Cameron Wheeler at 9:30 a.m. with Commissioners Alex Irby, Wayne Wright, Tony McDermott, Randy Budge, Bob Barowsky and Gary Power participating.

**LANDS**

**Redbird Canyon Purchase Acquisition**

Chairman Wheeler stated that the reason for this conference call is to discuss the process and perception of the process the Department and Commission has gone through to acquire the Redbird property. The call is not about the value of the Redbird property, or the quality, or what kind of benefits the property has. Discussion on the benefits of the property has already happened. Chairman Wheeler indicated there have been some red flags raised and some misconceptions on the process. The Commission desires to make the process transparent and to create the perception that the Commission is following correct procedures for acquiring the Redbird property.

Director Huffaker stated that the history to acquire the Redbird property goes so far back, and that there have been a lot of new Commissioners serving on the Commission since the process first began which is part of the reason for the confusion. Staff incorrectly assumed that people were up to speed on what was going on. He noted there is a need to review the facts.

A decision to ask the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation (IFWF) to buy the property and for the Department to buy it back was made about two years ago. At that time the Department had a potential conservation buyer (a private third party) who was interested in the property. That buyer fell through and from that point until now the IFWF has been willing to step up as the conservation buyer. This process is similar to what Nature Conservancy has done with the Chester Wetlands property.

Director Huffaker referenced the background information on the Redbird acquisition sent to Commissioners last week (Appendix 39 Exhibit 93). He asked Commissioners if they felt the information received was sufficient in providing the background and context needed to proceed with the process to acquire the Redbird property. He clarified the policy issue before the Commission as: Is this an appropriate process to use to purchase this property?

Commissioner Budge had questions regarding the Commission approval of the Redbird property and financing (Appendix 39 Exhibit 94). Commissioner Budge's questions and concerns were answered by Steve Barton and Director Huffaker.

Commissioner Wright reported that he feels the Redbird property is a good deal for the Department to purchase. He stated that he has some concerns with the process followed for acquiring the property. Commissioner Wright stated he felt the relationship and communication between the IFWF and the Department is lacking. Commissioner Wright would like for the Department to look into purchasing the property using tax free bonds and the possible savings that could incur for the Department.

Chairman Wheeler asked for a motion and an opportunity for Commissioners to debate the motion giving everyone a chance to express their concerns.

Commission discussion followed.

**06-63** Commissioner Irby moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded the motion **THAT THE COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE IDAHO FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION TO ACQUIRE THE REDBIRD PROPERTY. AFTER DISCUSSION AND WITH ALEX'S AGREEMENT, THE MOTION WAS AMENDED TO ACQUIRE THE REDBIRD PROPERTY CONDITIONAL UPON SECURING FINANCING UPON TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION.** The motion carried unanimously.

**06-64** Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Irby seconded a motion **FOR THE COMMISSION TO MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION AND DEVELOP A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) TO IDENTIFY AND CLARIFY THE RELATIONSHIPS, COMMUNICATIONS AND POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BETWEEN THE FOUNDATION, DEPARTMENT AND COMMISSION TO ENSURE THE TRANSPARENCY AND RELATIONSHIPS AND COMPLETE DISSEMINATION OF ACCURATE INFORMATION OCCURS.** The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion followed regarding the Hatley's offer asking for a response by August 31, 2006. The Commission agreed that there would not be enough time for the Foundation to look into other financing options and to meet with the Commission before that date. Commissioner Budge suggested a counter offer be made to the Hatley's. The motion follows.

**06-65** Commissioner Budge moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion **THAT THE COMMISSION DIRECTS THE DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A COUNTER OFFER TO THE HATLEY'S TO ACQUIRE THE PROPERTY FOR \$1.43 MILLION DOLLARS SUBJECT TO FINANCING BEING OBTAINED UPON TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION WITH A CLOSING DATE ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>.** The motion carried unanimously.

The Commission desires to schedule a meeting with the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Department to discuss motions **06-63** and **06-64** regarding financing, and the relationship with the IFWF. Director Huffaker will check availability of Department staff and IFWF members to schedule a meeting.

Adjournment 10:30 am

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Cameron Wheeler  
Chairman

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Terry M. Mansfield  
Secretary